Met Office

NEWS

Freezing conditions to last into spring

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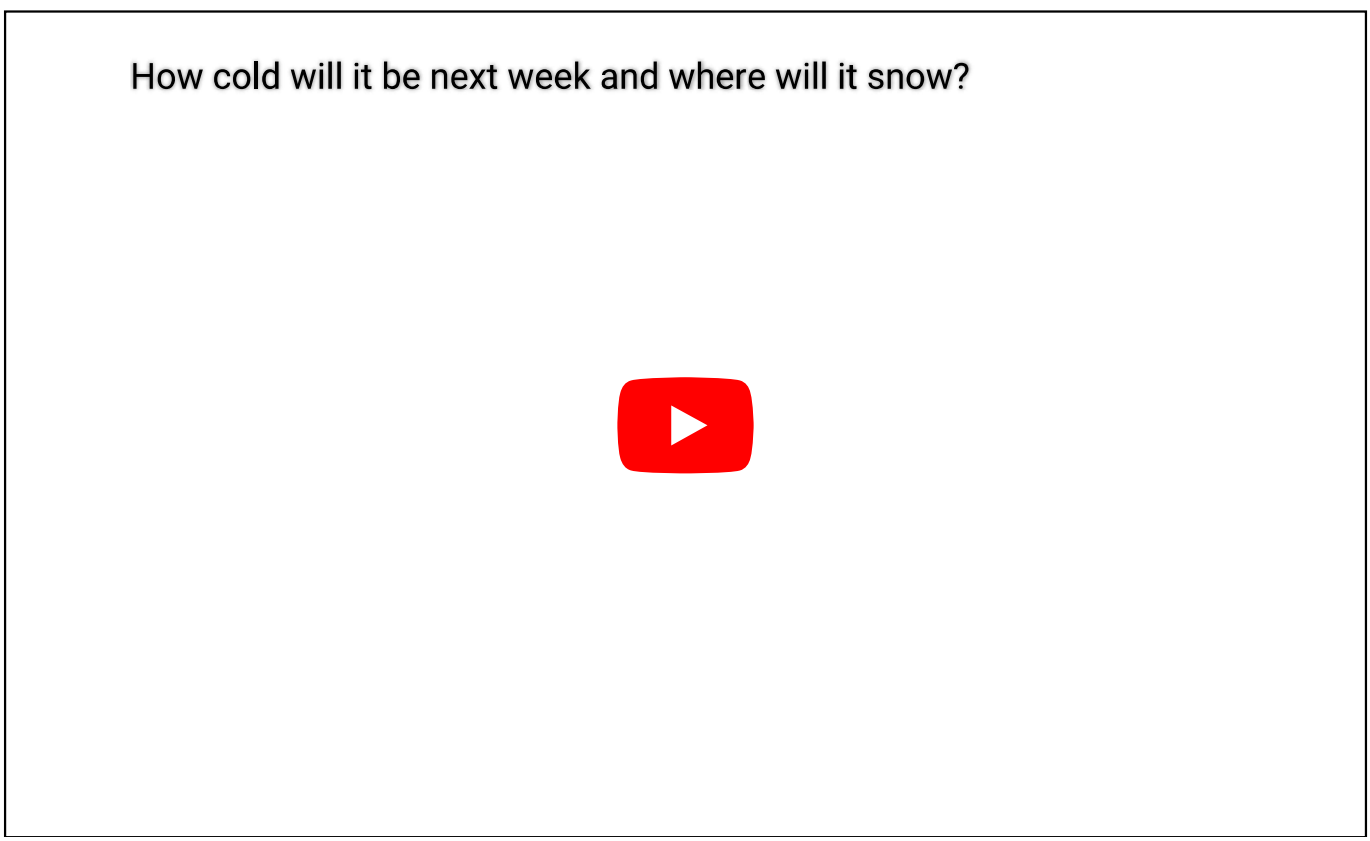
Conditions over the weekend and into the early part of next week will become increasingly cold, possibly exceptionally cold.

Yellow National Severe Weather Warnings for snow are in force for parts of eastern and southeast England from 4pm on Monday and for large parts of the UK through Tuesday and Wednesday.

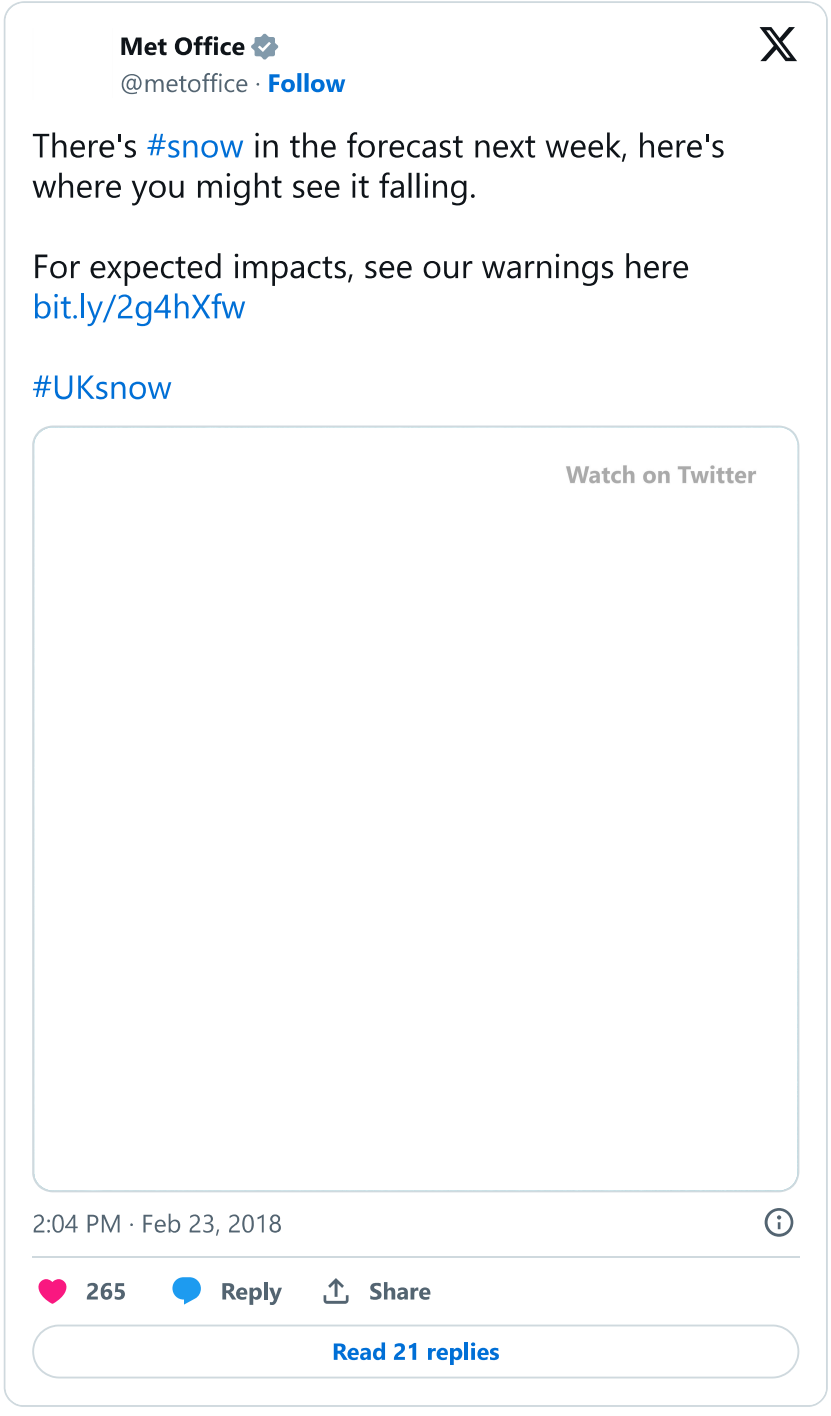
Snow showers are expected to develop widely during the start of the week, with some locations likely to see accumulations of 5 to 10 cm. Although other sites may see less frequent showers leading to much smaller accumulations up to 2 cm.



The very cold conditions, which are likely to be the coldest spell of weather for several years, are likely to remain in place for the remainder of next week. The cold easterly wind will persist bringing a significant wind chill which will make it feel several degrees colder than thermometers indicate. Even without the wind chill some locations will struggle to get above 0 °C by day, with night-time temperatures ranging down to -8 °C quite widely.

Paul Gundersen, a Met Office Chief Forecaster, said: “Parts of southern England and Wales are likely to the coldest spell of weather since 2013. Many places will be dry, but snow showers are expected to develop from Monday. There is the potential for some disruptive snowfall on Monday evening and through Tuesday. The regions most at risk of disruptive snow are parts of southeast England and East Anglia, although parts of northern England and eastern Scotland are also at risk. Transport disruption is likely in areas with significant snowfall.

“With such low temperatures, snowfall is likely to be powdery, bringing the risk of drifting in the strong easterly winds. However, the majority of the air is so dry that hoar frost and ice will be less likely to form.”



Although the cold spell is forecast to remain in place for some time, there is a large uncertainty in the potential for further snowfall.

Thursday is the first day of meteorological spring, but the high pressure over Scandinavia bringing the cold easterly flow is expected to remain in place for several days and there are signs that the cold spell in the UK is likely to last well into next week and perhaps into the following week.

The Met Office is working with partners in road, rail and air transport to help minimize the impacts on the public.

Dr Thomas Waite, of Public Health England's Extreme Events team, said: "With the days feeling a little longer and lighter it can be easy to forget that cold weather can still kill.

"Over 65s, those with conditions like heart and lung diseases and young children, are all at particular risk in cold weather as their bodies struggle to cope when temperatures fall. So before it gets cold check on friends, family and neighbours, who may be at risk and make sure they're heating homes to at least 18C, see if they need any particular help or just someone to talk to and keep an eye on the Met Office's forecasts and warnings. Remember keeping warm will help keep you well."

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